United Nations S/2014/113

Security Council

Distr.: General
20 February 2014

Original: English

Letter dated 19 February 2014 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to transmit the attached letter dated 7 February 2014 from the Deputy Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Mr. Alexander Vershbow, transmitting the quarterly report on the international security presence in Kosovo, covering the period from 1 October to 31 December 2013 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex

In accordance with paragraph 20 of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I attach a report on the operations of the Kosovo Force covering the period from 1 October to 31 December 2013.

I would appreciate your making this report available to the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Vershbow**

Enclosure

Report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

Introduction

1. The present report on the Kosovo Force (KFOR) is provided in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and covers the period from 1 October to 31 December 2013.

2. As at 31 December 2013, the total number of KFOR troops in theatre remained approximately 5,000.

3. The reporting period was characterized by the municipal elections that took place on 3 and 17 November for the first round, as well as on 1 December 2013 for the second round and a partial re-run in Zvečan.

Security situation and operations

4. During the reporting period, the security situation in theatre remained calm in the southern part of Kosovo and reasonably stable in the northern part of Kosovo. The implementation of the European Union-facilitated agreement of 19 April 2013 on the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina, including the election campaign for the Kosovo-wide municipal elections, dominated the operating environment of KFOR during the reporting period. Against such positive developments, the KFOR mission to contribute to a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement continued as part of the comprehensive international effort.

5. The pre-election period was generally calm and stable, without major security incidents or violent opposition to the overall election campaign. The first round of the Kosovo municipal elections on 3 November 2013 was affected by disruptions at three polling centres in Mitrovica, which required the polling to be repeated at those locations on 17 November 2013. Because the necessary majority was not achieved in a number of municipalities on 3 November 2013, a second round of voting was held in 25 municipalities on 1 December 2013, as well as a partial re-run in Zvečan. The conduct of the second round of local elections was mostly peaceful and without major security incidents.

6. KFOR, in its capacity as third responder, continued to maintain its capability to pre-empt and respond effectively to disruptions to both a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement. The main focus of KFOR was on the security situation during the municipal elections period, working in close coordination with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX). KFOR remained ready to provide immediate intervention if required with a main focus on Mitrovica North and Zvečan. KFOR forces also maintained full situational awareness in the remaining municipalities in the southern part of Kosovo through an established system of patrols and reaction forces. Apart from the first round of elections, when disruptions at three polling centres in Mitrovica occurred, there was no requirement for direct intervention by KFOR during the reporting period.

7. Following the outcome of the working groups on the implementation of the European Union-facilitated agreement, tax collection at Gate 1 and DOG 31 in the northern part of Kosovo started according to plan and without incidents on 14 December 2013.

Summary

8. During the reporting period, KFOR, in its capacity as third responder, contributed to maintaining both a safe and secure environment and ensuring freedom of movement in close coordination with EULEX and the Kosovo Police. The close coordination on the ground between KFOR, EULEX and the Kosovo Police was highly effective in supporting OSCE during the recent municipal elections. This showed the ability of these three actors to monitor the security situation closely, maintain an appropriate deterrent posture and react quickly and decisively when required.